

indeed, was wanting to complete Wycliffe's triumph except a popular demonstration in his favour, and that was soon forthcoming. At an early stage of the trial a mob from the city broke into the Archbishop's chapel at Lambeth, where the session was being held, and interrupted the business with characteristic violence. 'In this way,' says the enraged chronicler, 'that slippery John Wycliffe deluded his inquisitors, mocked the Bishops, and escaped them by the favour and care of the Londoners, although all his propositions are clearly heretical and depraved.'

The government did not let the matter rest here. Although Wycliffe's imprisonment at Oxford had been merely nominal and collusive, the Vice-Chancellor had technically laid himself open to the charge of incarcerating one of the King's subjects at the orders of the Pope. Being already in bad odour with the government for other reasons, he was arrested and thrown into prison on this ground.* Henceforth there could be no question of the nullity of the Pope's inquisitorial powers in England. Though Wycliffe's popularity in high quarters soon began to wane, the events of his trial at Lambeth had settled this question for good. When Church and State in the next generation suppressed heresy, they used the ecclesiastical Courts and the Statute law of the land together, but not the authority of Rome. The distinction may seem to some nice and unimportant. It may be said, persecution is persecution, by whatever tribunals it is inflicted. Nevertheless it was no small advantage for England that we succeeded in keeping out the Pope's Inquisitors, though we could not keep out his collectors and his pardon-mongers. The Papal Inquisition was not a mere name, but a terrible and active instrument of evil. It had destroyed the numerous and formidable rebellions of European intellect in the Middle Ages, and was at that moment engaged in its work of blood and cruelty among the Waldenses,³ who continued, down to the time when Milton immortalised their sufferings in a sonnet, to occupy in Christendom the position of the Armenians in Turkey. If Papal Inquisition had been permitted in England, the first

ulog» \$40.
Sismondi, *History of the Republics of Italy*, vol. 1, p. 212. a.3, sab,
&**. 1875, ed 1821-44.